

The Scientific Name of the Nehu, an Engraulid Baitfish of the Hawaiian Islands¹

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The nehu, a small baitfish commonly used for tuna fishing in Hawaiian waters, was originally described as *Stolephorus purpureus* in 1900 by Fowler (1900, *Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila., Proc.*, p. 497). Since that time it has been variously assigned to the genera *Stolephorus*, *Anchovia*, *Anchoviella*, *Engraulis*, and *Scutengraulis*, and no agreement has been reached. Though future revision of the anchovies on a world-wide basis may show that the nehu belongs elsewhere, under the present classification of the group it may best be allocated to the genus in which it was placed originally as *Stolephorus purpureus*.

Of the five genera to which the nehu has been assigned, *Stolephorus*, *Anchoviella*, and *Engraulis* deserve most serious consideration. Jordan and Seale in their now outdated "Review of the Engraulidae" (1926, *Mus. Comp. Zool., Bul.* 67: 403) place the nehu in the genus *Anchoviella*. Hardenberg (1933, *Natuurk. Tijdschr. Neder.-Indie* 93: 242) believes that the three genera *Engraulis*, *Anchoviella*, and *Stolephorus* as defined by Jordan and Seale cannot be maintained and should be combined under the oldest generic name, *Stolephorus*. Hildebrand (1943, *Bingham Ocean. Coll., Bul.* 8(2): 108) resurrects the generic name *Anchoviella* for some American anchovies, but on a different basis from *Anchoviella* of Jordan and Seale. Hildebrand fails to state how his *Anchoviella* differs from *Stolephorus*, and a comparison between the American *Anchoviella* as defined by Hildebrand and the Indo-West-Pacific *Stolephorus* remains to be made. Nevertheless, since *Stolephorus* is the older of the two generic names and since the Hawaiian Islands have a

basically Indo-West Pacific fauna, it seems safe to conclude that the nehu belongs with *Stolephorus* rather than with *Anchoviella*.

Both Hildebrand (*op. cit.*) and Blackburn (1950, *Austral. Jour. Mar. Freshwater Res.* 1(1): 5) likewise resurrect *Engraulis* from Hardenberg's synonymy of *Stolephorus*. The nehu does not belong in *Engraulis* as defined by these authors and thus, by elimination, remains with *Stolephorus*.

Two other problems of nehu nomenclature, though long since solved, continue to haunt ichthyological literature. One is the application of the name *Stolephorus* itself. Lacépède, who proposed the name, included under it species of two different families and designated no genotype. The question therefore arose as to which genus of which family the name *Stolephorus* should be applied. This matter was eventually resolved by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, which (Opinion 93) designated *Stolephorus commersonianus*, a fish of the nehu group, as genotype of *Stolephorus*. Unfortunately, Fowler, Whitley, and Blackburn continue to apply the name *Stolephorus* erroneously to a genus of herring-like fishes.

Finally, *Anchoviella mauii* was described by Fowler and Bean (1924, *U. S. Natl. Mus., Proc.* 63(19): 4) as new and as from Maui. However, Fowler has since pointed out (1934, *Bernice P. Bishop Mus., Mem.* 11(6): 387) that the species is not new and that the Maui record is not correct. The nehu, *Stolephorus purpureus*, thus remains the only anchovy recorded from the Hawaiian Islands.

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